

Promotion and Tenure Committee Report to the Senate

This report covers the work done by the committee during the 2000-2001 academic year. During that time we considered: 33 cases and reviewed approximately six new hires.

The PTC voted to promote 17 candidates to full professor, 12 to associate professor with tenure, and 1 to associate professor. The PTC voted not to promote 1 candidate to full professor and 2 candidates to associate professor with tenure.

During this time The PTC agreed with the department all but one time in promotion to full, and all but twice in promotion to associate with tenure. The Administration agreed with the PTC's recommendation all but once.

The administration doesn't overturn our decisions very often, and when they do, we are satisfied that the cases are getting very careful scrutiny and adequate analyses at both at the level of Dean and Provost. We can say that the relationship between the PTC and the administration has improved over the past year. Two years ago we were fighting with President and the Dean, but now I can comfortably report that everything is working fine.

Interaction with Provost and Other Actions

During the spring semester of 2001, the Provost convened a meeting with members of the PTCs of the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Engineering to discuss the teaching and promotion. This was precipitated by a case in which an associate professor going up for promotion had evidence of weak classroom teaching, especially at the undergraduate level—in general courses. The committee felt that professor had made some valuable contributions in teaching areas with graduate students and outside the classroom, enough so to warrant promotion. The PTC felt that as long as the faculty in the department could say the candidate served whatever role they had mapped out for him, no matter what that role was, then we wouldn't look deeper. The Provost thought that this candidate's teaching record wasn't necessarily good enough for promotion to full professor.

The professor was ultimately promoted, but the case prompted the Provost to form a committee of Distinguished teaching professors whose task is to provide recommendations for teaching criteria related to promotion to full professor. It is the PTC's thinking that their report, once it is submitted, should be followed by a discussion as to how to translate their recommendations into revisions of PTC guidelines, which, at this time don't speak specifically to criteria for promotion to full professor.

Other concerns

Another concern of the PTC is the minimum criteria for promotion (both to associate and full) in the area of research. This is a problem that has come up quite often over the past few years. One discipline requires a number of refereed articles, others a major monograph or two. We would like to develop guidelines for all the academic disciplines.

We're thinking of running a roundtable discussion of what goes into promotion, other institutes, etc. Since it's policy we don't want to do a major public forum. We simply would like to begin discussions as to what it is that is considered to be the standard for each discipline.

Another concern we have is that the progress of cases from departments to the administration to us and from the administration back to the candidates has been slow. As noted in the past reports a number of candidates have been raising questions about the progress of their files. This seems to be happening more often than in the past.

On other fronts, this committee initiated the first posthumous promotion of a professor. The late Mitchell Stern, of Music Department, died unexpectedly while his case was being prepared. I am happy to report that his promotion went through, serving as an honor to his memory.

Beyond policy concerns, we are working on recommendations for streamlining the paperwork and improving the organization of the files that are reviewed. We will gather all of our recommendations and present them at one time in the near future.

Submitted February 18, 2001

Fred Gardaphe, Chair

Promotion and Tenure Committee